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Ministry of Forests and Range

VALEMOUNT OFFERED COMMUNITY FOREST AGREEMENT

VALEMOUNT The Village of Valemount has been offered a five-year probationary community forest agreement, Prince George-Mount Robson MLA Shirley Bond announced today.

"This is great news for Valemount and the Robson Valley. This was a top priority for me and it's clear that all the hard work done by each party has produced a positive result," said Bond. "The village has been very proactive in developing a community forest proposal to recover as much value as possible from mountain pine beetle affected stands. Combined with the existing McBride Community Forest and a potential community forest in Dunster, there could be up to 105,000 cubic meters available in the Valley."

The community forest agreement carries an initial five-year term, and grants the Village of Valemount the right to harvest up to 40,000 cubic metres of timber per year, on public forest lands within the Robson Valley timber supply area. The agreement will increase the harvesting of beetle wood in the area, provide new opportunities for employment and contracting, promote new partnerships with First Nations, and address forest health and the wildland/urban interface fire risk.

"We are immensely pleased to be provided with the opportunity to establish a community forest," said Valemount Mayor Jeannette Townsend. "The long-term goal for economic well being in Valemount includes a blended economy of forestry and tourism. A community forest will certainly be a major contribution to the successful realization of our economic strategy."

Community forest tenures are area-based, and give communities exclusive rights to harvest timber, as well as the opportunity to manage forest resources such as timber and plant products, recreation, wildlife, water and scenic viewscapes, to meet local needs, in accordance with the Province's forestry legislation and regulations.

Probationary community forest agreements are a form of legal tenure by which the Province transfers decision-making to communities that wish to more fully participate in the stewardship of local Crown forest resources. They are intended to stimulate long-term employment, forest-related education and skills training as well as other social, environmental and economic benefits while meeting environmental stewardship standards.

After an initial term of five years, the agreements may be replaced with a long-term agreement for 25 years.

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